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Green Economy in Eastern Partner Countries

Environmental Compliance Assurance System review of Georgia: Main findings

**EU4Environment regional environmental compliance assurance seminar on
“Better environmental inspections for stronger environmental resilience”**

5-6 December 2022

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The environmental compliance assurance system review of Georgia: timeline and approach



April 2021 - July 2022

- Secondary research
- Information requests
- Virtual interviews with stakeholders (October 2021)

28 April 2022

- Virtual discussion with government stakeholders

April - November 2022

- Addressing comments from government stakeholders and reviewers

Presentation at the regional seminar

5 December 2022

- Presentation at the third regional environmental compliance assurance seminar

Publication

Early 2023

- Integration of final comments, editing and publication

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Legislative and institutional set-up

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Developments and recommendations regarding the legislative framework

Highlights

- Extensive environmental legislation
- Implementation of the Association Agreement with the European Union is a priority
- Law on Environmental Liability adopted in 2021
- Draft law on industrial emissions (integrated permitting and the use of BAT)
- Extensive consultations on draft laws, in which civil society is particularly active
- Improvement of IT infrastructure for public information provision

Recommendations

- Update and harmonise environmental legislation
- Provide more opportunities for private sector representatives to participate in policy making
- Improve consultation with the DES
- Centralise information provision
- Address complementary issues with stakeholder engagement



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Developments and recommendations regarding the permitting framework

Highlights

- The Environmental Assessment Code has increased transparency in permitting
- The draft law on industrial emissions (expected in 2023) will establish integrated permitting and the use of BAT (by 2026)
- The MEPA is developing an online environmental permitting system and plans to establish an Electronic Licensing System for natural resource use

Recommendations

- Move towards integrated permitting and BAT
- Raise awareness about the Environmental Assessment Code's permitting procedure
- Establish a fixed duration of permit validity
- Make permitting fees more proportionate and tiered
- Digitise permitting and establish a shared database of environmental permits
- Improve consultation with the DES
- Increase transparency and consider a fit and proper test for natural resource use licenses



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Institutional set-up for environmental compliance assurance

Government of Georgia



Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture (MEPA)



Department of Environmental Supervision (DES)

Legal Department



National Environmental Agency (NEA)



Environmental Information and Education Centre (EIEC)

Department of Environmental Assessment (DEA)

Department of Environmental Damage Remedial Measures

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Developments and recommendations regarding the institutional set-up

Highlights

- Policy-making and control activities are separated: the Department of Environmental Supervision (DES) of the MEPA, established in 2013, carries out control activity
- The DES has been improving and digitising its information management and obtaining new equipment
- The Environmental Information and Education Centre (EIEC) facilitates environmental education and awareness-raising and provides training

Recommendations

- Conduct a structural review and streamline the institutional structure
- Improve institutional co-ordination
- Improve information management processes and equipment at the DES (field laboratory equipment and electronic technology)
- Address staff shortages through financial incentives and adopt a structured training programme

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